

Frequently Asked Questions about Water Restrictions

Where do lawn and landscape irrigation restrictions allow watering two days a week?

These restrictions apply in all of Collier, Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties and most of Broward, Glades, Hendry, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach and St. Lucie Counties, and the cities within Lee County, except Cape Coral.

Lawn irrigation for all property sizes is allowed two days a week on the following schedule:

- Residents and businesses with **odd**-numbered street addresses may water lawns and landscapes on **Wednesdays** and **Saturdays** from **12 a.m. to 10 a.m. and/or** from **4 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.**
- Residents and businesses with **even**-numbered street addresses, no street address or irrigate both even and odd address within the same zones, including multi-family units and homeowners associations, may water lawns and landscapes on **Thursdays** and **Sundays** from **12 a.m. to 10 a.m. and/or** from **4 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.**

For the most efficient use of water, residents should avoid irrigating during both time periods on the same day.

When can I water newly planted sod, trees or other landscaping in Collier, Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties and in most of Broward, Glades, Hendry, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach and St. Lucie Counties, and in the cities within Lee County, except Cape Coral.

New landscaping can be watered without regard to restrictions on the first day it is installed.

- Landscaping that has been in place from 2 days to 30 days can be watered on **Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays** and/or **Sundays** during the hours allowed for regular landscape irrigation.
- Landscaping that has been in place from 31 days to 60 days can be watered on **Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays** and **Saturdays** during the hours allowed for regular landscape irrigation.
- Additional watering days can only be used to benefit new landscaping. An entire irrigation system zone may only be watered if it contains at least 50 percent new landscaping.

What lawn watering schedule is in place for the City of Cape Coral?

Residential and non-residential water users in Cape Coral should follow the schedule in the city's water restriction ordinance. The watering schedule is online at:

<http://www.capecoral.net/Government/PublicWorks/CapeCoralWateringSchedule/tabid/457/Default.aspx>.

What lawn watering schedule is in place for unincorporated Lee County?

Private well users and residents of unincorporated areas of Lee County should follow the county's year-round ordinance that prohibits watering between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. The watering schedule is online at:

http://www3.leegov.com/utilities/autopage_t2_r166.htm.

Where do lawn and landscape irrigation restrictions allow watering one day a week?

Water utility customers in the service areas of Dania Beach, Hallandale Beach and Lake Worth are on restrictions allowing once-weekly watering to help protect their coastal wells from saltwater intrusion. Water restrictions help to ensure that there is enough fresh water remaining in the system to prevent the inland flow of salt water.

- **Odd-numbered addresses can water lawns and landscapes on Mondays from EITHER 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. OR from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.**
- **Even-numbered addresses can water lawns and landscapes on Thursdays from EITHER 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. OR from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

When can newly planted sod, trees or other landscaping be watered by water utility customers in the service areas of Dania Beach, Hallandale Beach and Lake Worth?

For properties less than five acres:

- New landscaping that has been in place for less than 30 days can be irrigated from **2 a.m. to 8 a.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and/or Sundays.**
- New landscaping that has been in place for 31 days to 60 days can be irrigated from **2 a.m. to 8 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.**

For properties five acres or more:

- New landscaping that has been in place for less than 30 days can be irrigated from **12 a.m. to 8 a.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and/or Sundays.**
- New landscaping that has been in place for 31 to 60 days can be irrigated from **12 a.m. to 8 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.**

What lawn watering schedule is in place in Orange, Osceola, Charlotte, Highlands and Polk counties?

- **Orange and Osceola counties, including residents served by St. Cloud Environmental Utilities and Tohopekaliga Water Authority** should follow the twice-weekly landscape irrigation schedules set by local ordinances.

Tohopekaliga Water Authority restrictions are online at:

<http://www.tohowater.com/days.html>.

St. Cloud Environmental Utilities restrictions are online at:

<http://www.stcloud.org/index.aspx?nid=471>.

- **Charlotte, Highlands and Polk counties** should follow landscape irrigation restrictions set by the Southwest Florida Water Management. Their restrictions are online at: <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/drought/>.

Is anyone automatically exempted from water restrictions?

Yes. Because 100 percent of the water used by the **Town of Highland Beach in Palm Beach County** is drawn from the deep Floridan Aquifer, these customers are exempt from current restrictions. For details, visit the town's website online at: <http://www.ci.highland-beach.fl.us/index.aspx?NID=101>. Other communities and individuals may have been granted variances from water restrictions. Anyone with a variance from water restrictions must display a copy of the variance in a visible location. Voluntary water conservation is encouraged.

Do other restrictions apply to South Florida residents irrigating with 100% reclaimed or supplemented reclaimed water?

Yes. Irrigation using 100 percent reclaimed or supplemented reclaimed water is allowed from **12 a.m. to 10 a.m. and/or 4 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.**, any day of the week, **except in Cape Coral**. Cape Coral residents should refer to details on this list at Other Communities/Water Districts.

Water reclaimed from water sewage treatment plants is not meant for drinking and is used almost exclusively for irrigation. It is usually transferred in purple pipes.

How often should I irrigate my lawn?

Proper irrigation is based on the amount of water each lawn needs. Lawns and landscapes typically need to receive only three-quarters to an inch of water each week. This usually means a maximum of two hours of irrigation per week, or a maximum of 15 minutes per irrigation zone for each water application. The lawn may not need to be watered at all if it has rained during the week.

I water my lawn from a well, canal, pond or surface lake. Do these restrictions apply to me?

Yes. Surface and groundwater sources are connected. Water in lakes and canals helps to protect private and public wells from saltwater intrusion, and stores rainfall to recharge wells and aquifers.

Can I hand water my lawn?

Yes. You can hand water stressed plants for 10 minutes per day using a single hose with an attached automatic shut-off or trigger nozzle.

Is low-volume watering allowed?

Yes. Low-volume irrigation that applies water directly to root plant zones, including drip, bubble and micro-jet systems, and watering cans may be used anytime. Water collected in cisterns and rain barrels may also be used for irrigation anytime. Low-volume irrigation should not produce water runoff.

When can I wash my car or boat?

Anytime. Vehicle washing is not restricted, but voluntary conservation is encouraged. When washing a car, park it over a non-paved or porous surface to reduce water runoff and always attach an automatic shut-off or trigger nozzle to your hose. Limit boat rinsing to 15 minutes after it has been in salt water.

My organization is scheduling a fundraising car wash. Do we need to apply for a variance?

No. There are no restrictions on vehicle washing. Always attach automatic trigger or shut-off nozzles to hoses and, if possible, channel runoff water to a grassy area or porous surface.

When can I use a water pressure washer?

Anytime. Pressure washing is not restricted. Use low-volume equipment that produces water pressure of 1,000 pounds per square inch to 4,000 pounds per square inch. Channel runoff water onto the grass or another non-paved surface.

Can I apply for permission to change my watering day or times?

Yes. You may apply for a variance from water restrictions. The variance application form is online at:

https://my.sfwmd.gov/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/Common/PDF/SHORTAGE/APPL_VARIANCE_2006.PDF,

and instructions for completing the form are online at:

https://my.sfwmd.gov/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/Common/PDF/SHORTAGE/VARIANCE_HOWTO_2006.PDF.

Your application will be reviewed by South Florida Water Management District staff, and approval or denial is based on criteria listed in

the Water Shortage Plan Rule. The rule is online at:

https://my.sfwmd.gov/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/PG_GRP_SFWMD_ENVIROR EG/PORTLET_RULESSTATUTESAND/TAB383534/40E-21.PDF.

For more information, visit www.sfwmd.gov or call (800) 432-2045.

What happens if I don't follow these restrictions?

Residential and commercial water restrictions are mandatory and will be enforced by South Florida Water Management District staff, local governments and law enforcement agencies. Residential fines vary by municipality, but typically range from \$25 to \$125 for a first offense. Civil penalties for violations of restrictions by District permittees and commercial users begin at \$1,500 and can increase depending on the severity of the violation.

How can I report violations of water restrictions?

You may report violations to local law enforcement or city/county zoning and code enforcement agencies. Both have the authority to issue warnings and citations that can lead to fines. See the list of county and city enforcement contacts online at:

https://my.sfwmd.gov/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/Common/PDF/SPLASH/WATER_SHORTAGE_ENFORCE_LIST.PDF.

If you choose to notify your local law enforcement agency, please call their non-emergency number.

Other related questions:

What is saltwater intrusion and how is it related to water restrictions?

Saltwater intrusion happens when saltwater from the sea flows beneath the land surface into freshwater aquifers. It is a natural process that occurs in most coastal areas, but one that can contaminate water used for drinking if it is not managed.

A graphic showing saltwater intrusion is online at:

https://my.sfwmd.gov/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/Common/NEWSR/SW_INTRUSION.PDF

If we're trying to conserve water, why is the South Florida Water Management District releasing freshwater from coastal canals into the sea?

The South Florida Water Management District is storing as much water as possible, but there are limits in a system that was designed for flood control. Many communities, particularly east of I-95, can quickly flood following an excessive rainfall event. Even if it doesn't look as if your neighborhood is in danger of flooding, communities upstream or downstream may need flood relief that can only happen if water levels in canals are low enough to accommodate runoff. The South Florida Water Management District is always exploring

options to reduce the amount of water released to tide, but this is a normal part of critical flood control operations. For details about how the flood control system works, read the Know the Flow brochure online at:

https://my.sfwmd.gov/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/Common/PDF/KNOW_THE_FLOW.PDF.